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ABSTRACT

To identify personal, economic, educational, and social factors influencing students' educational aspirations, data were collected from 1,004 seniors in Prince Edward Island, Canada, in 1971; analysis included male-female and urban-rural differences. From 960 usable questionnaires, level of educational aspiration was determined by respondents' after high school graduation plans. Findings were that factors of age, motivation to continue education, occupational expectation, and discussion with an adult in the desired occupation were significantly associated with aspiration levels for all seniors, as were school factors, county of residence, family intellectual tradition and income, and parent's ability to help. In male-female comparisons, family factors tended to have greater influence on females, and county of residence and rural-urban residence (higher for urban than rural females) had differential influences. In rural-urban comparisons, aspiration level was significantly influenced by peer discussion of education plans for urban students and county of residence for rural students. Family socioeconomic status did not have significant association for rural students, though partly influenced urban ones. However, factor analysis showed family to be the most important factor affecting aspiration level. Rural-urban difference may be largely a function of different family circumstances. (RS)

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# FACTORS IN EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

## A Study of Educational Aspiration of High School Seniors in Prince Edward Island Canada

by
Satadal Dasgupta
P. Nagarajan

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by
**Satadal Dasgupta**
**P. Nagarajan ***

**P.E.I. Community Studies Report No. 4**

**Department of Sociology and Anthropology**
**University of Prince Edward Island**
**Charlottetown, P.E.I.**
**Canada**

September '77

* in alphabetical order

## FOREWORD

This study was supported by the funds provided by the Senate Research Committee of the University of Prince Edward Island. The data for the study were collected by Peter Preeble, Patricia Kartick and Henry Tam. Jackson Siu and Kwong Cheung Kit assisted in the analysis of the data. Donna Stewart assisted in preparing and editing the report. The authors are thankful to the Principals and other officials of the high schools in Prince Edward Island who provided kind assistance and invaluable help in collecting the data. Appreciation is also expressed to the students who participated in the study and provided the information which made this study possible.

This report is number 4 of the P.E.I. Community Studies series published by the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Prince Edward Island. The report number 1 is entitled, Selected Annotated Bibliography of Recent Research on Rural Life on Prince Edward Island, by A. F. MacDonald and H. J. O'Connell (eds.). The title of the report number 2 is, Structure and Change in Atlantic Canada, by Satadal Dasgupta (ed.). The report number 3 is entitled, Man, Community and Water: A Study of Local Attitudes Toward Dunk River Development, by Satadal Dasgupta. Copies of these reports are available from the Department.

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## INTRODUCTION

This study deals with the educational aspirations of high school seniors in Prince Edward Island, Canada. The major objective of this study is to identify the personal, economic, educational and social factors that influence the students' educational aspirations. The data on which this study is based were collected in 1971 by administering a questionnaire to grade twelve students from all the high schools in the Province. The findings of this study are based on the analysis of the responses of 960 high school seniors in Prince Edward Island.

The Senior year in high school marks a crucial stage in the career of any youth. It is at this point that the student has to make a decision with respect to his future. Should he enter the labor force immediately after high school graduation or should he continue his education and forgo the opportunity to earn money? His choice will affect his future considerably. It will influence his family life, social relationships, leisure time, social and occupational mobility, and also his health and retirement considerations in later years. What are the factors which are responsible for the educational and occupational choices of the senior? Why would some students plan to further their education beyond high school whereas others terminate their studies and plan other courses of action?

The educational system is interpreted as a mechanism for training youth to perform well in a complex, interdependent and highly organized occupational system. All occupations are ranked in the social system and education is considered to be one of the major social mechanisms for distributing persons in the various levels of the occupational hierarchy. Today scientific and technological changes cause old occupations to be eliminated as new ones emerge. These demand more sophisticated occupational skills which are better learnt by the more educated workers. Most of the occupations which are coming into being tend to be more complex and exacting than the discarded ones. Consequently the achievements of youths in the educational system highly influence their attainments in the occupational hierarchy as the more complex tasks demand more highly educated workers. The quality of the job a youth procures and his ability to be successful in it depend largely on the amount and quality of the education he receives.

Studies indicate that the level of educational aspiration among high school students in North America is rising (Slocum,

1966:5). The rising educational aspirations among high school students is obviously related to the industrial development and rapid urban growth in North America. Occupational mobility in such a technologically developed society depends upon one's educational achievement, for it is only the educated workers who can learn the new and highly sophisticated skills. The relationship between educational achievement and occupational mobility is clearly obvious to high school students in North America today.

The total enrolment at the university level in Canada increased by 213 percent during the period between 1960 and 1971.[1] This represented an annual growth rate of 11 percent. In 1971, the full-time enrolment in Canadian universities was 357,000. Less than one-third of the growth in university enrolment since 1961 can be attributed to an increase in population. The rapid growth in university enrolment during the period between 1960 and 1971 was mostly due to improved participation. The rapid growth in the population base and the improved participation rate both provided momentum to the growth of enrolments at the university level during the 1960's. However, since 1970-71 the rate of increase in university enrolment in Canada has slowed down and, perhaps, a new trend is taking shape as far as university enrolment is concerned. Although the rate of increase has slowed down, a large proportion of high school seniors in Canada continue to enter the universities after their graduation.

Post-secondary enrolment at the non-university level in Canada grew by 141 percent (from 49,000 to 119,000) during the period between 1960 and 1971.[2] In 1960-61, students in nursing and teacher's training made up 81 percent of the post-secondary non-university enrolment. In 1970-71 the students in these two fields accounted for only 31 percent of the non-university enrolment, the remaining 69 percent consisted of students in a host of other career programs ranging from applied arts, business administration and secretarial science, to various technological fields such as architecture, library science, health professions and engineering.

Related to the population of the 18 - 21 age group, the enrolment rate for males in post-secondary non-university institutions was 7.6 percent in 1970 - 71 as opposed to 2.9 percent in 1960 -61. The enrolment rate for females remained relatively stable, fluctuating around 6 and 7 percent during the same period, primarily because of the transfer of teacher-training, with its predominantly female enrolment, to universities.[3] Thus, the non-university

1. See, Statistics Canada, Education in Canada: A Statistical Review for the Period 1960-61 to 1970-71, Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1973, pp. 57-62.
2. Ibid. pp. 55-56.
3. Ibid. p. 56.

component of post-secondary education continues to grow in enrolment although the rate of increase in enrolment of the university component has slowed down somewhat.

The number of studies on the educational aspirations of high school students in Canada are very few, and the importance of empirical research in this area and the paucity of Canadian studies on educational aspirations have been recognized and reflected in the writings of several Canadian researchers (Jackson and Flemming, 1956; Dunlop, 1962; Elkin, 1964; and Bretton and MacDonald, 1967). A great many studies have been conducted in the United States since 1950 on factors associated with educational aspiration.[4] These studies have focused attention on the effects of social environments and contexts on the educational aspirations and goals of high school students. A number of important structural variables such as the size and socio-economic character of the school, neighborhood or community of residence have been considered in a number of recent studies (Wilson, 1959; Michael, 1961; Sewell, 1964; Sewell and Armer, 1966; and Schwarzweller, 1968). On an interactional level, the nature of peer group association has been considered to be an important variable in affecting educational aspiration (Haller and Butterworth, 1960).

The search for rural-urban differences in educational aspiration has been a central concern in most of the research conducted in the United States. The findings of these studies generally indicate that students from rural and farm backgrounds tend to show a lower level of educational aspiration than those who are from urbanized settings (see Sewell, 1964: 24-25, for references on numerous studies on rural-urban difference in educational aspiration) However, a few studies failed to support the hypothesis that farm residence is negatively correlated with the level of educational aspiration (for example, see Haller, 1958: 355-362).

The objectives of this study are (1) to identify the factors which are associated with the differential educational aspirations of the high school seniors in Prince Edward Island; (2) to identify the extent of,and the factors associated with, the differences in educational aspirations between male and female high school seniors in Prince Edward Island; and (3) to identify the extent of, and the factors associated with, differences in educational aspiration between urban and rural high school seniors in Prince Edward Island.

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4. See, Kuvlesky and Ohlendorf, 1965; also see Sewell, 1964: 24-25.

## DATA AND METHOD

The data used in this study were collected in May, 1971, by administering a questionnaire to the grade twelve students from all 17 high schools in the Province. All high school seniors who were present in class on the days the questionnaire was administered were included in the study. The total number of seniors who responded to the questionnaires was 1,004. The data from forty-four questionnaires had to be excluded from the analysis because of inadequate information. The present analysis is thus based on the responses of 960 high school seniors.

The selected characteristics of the respondents have been presented in Table 1. About 60 percent of the respondents were female while a little over 40 percent were male. About one-fifth of the respondents were over 18 years of age. The Island province is divided into three counties: Kings county to the east, Prince county to the west, and Queens county in the center. A little over 40 percent of the respondents were from the high schools in Prince county. A little over one-third of the respondents were from the high schools in Queens county, while about one-fifth of the respondents came from the high schools in Kings county. Over one-half of the students were from rural communities, of whom a little over one-half were from a rural-farm background while the other half came from a rural-nonfarm background. Over forty percent of the students came from an urban background. Over two-thirds of the respondents perceived their family income to be average; about one-fourth of the respondents felt that their family income was above average. About one-tenth perceived their family income to be below average. Over one-half of the students had a grade average of 60 - 70 percent from grade 10 to 12. Over one-fourth had a grade average of 70 to 80 percent, while 14 percent of the respondents had a grade average of over 80 percent. Only three percent of the respondents had a grade average of below 60 percent.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part one dealt with the personal and family background of the respondent; his educational aspirations and plans; and the extent to which the respondent discussed his educational plans with his parents, teachers and/or counselors. Part two of the questionnaire included the respondents' residence, and farm and non-farm background; school experiences and contacts; information relating to family circumstances and norms; the respondents' occupational aspirations and goals; and the respondents' long range plans regarding education and work. The questionnaire included 77 items in all and it took about 90 minutes, on the average, to complete the questionnaire.

Arrangements were made in every school to gather all the grade twelve students into a classroom on a day previously

Table 1. Selected Characteristics of the Respondents

| Characteristics | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Sex | | |
| Male | 397 | 41.4 |
| Female | 563 | 58.6 |
| Age | | |
| 18 years or below | 774 | 80.6 |
| 19 years or above | 186 | 19.4 |
| County Residence | | |
| Kings | 186 | 19.4 |
| Queens | 367 | 38.2 |
| Prince | 407 | 42.4 |
| Rural-Urban Residence* | | |
| Rural | 541 | 56.4 |
| Farm | 284 | 29.6 |
| Nonfarm | 257 | 26.8 |
| Urban | 419 | 43.6 |
| Family Income | | |
| Above average | 220 | 23.0 |
| Average | 635 | 66.1 |
| Below average | 105 | 10.9 |
| Grade Average | | |
| Above 80 percent | 134 | 14.0 |
| 70 to 80 percent | 264 | 27.5 |
| 60 to 70 percent | 529 | 55.1 |
| Below 60 percent | 33 | 3.4 |

*The students who resided in communities which were at least 1000 in population size were considered as "urban". The rural students who came from families whose major source of income was from farming activities were classified as "rural-farm", while those who came from families whose source of income was from non-farm activities were classified as "non-farm".

arranged through the co-operation of the Principal and the counselors of the school. A research assistant explained to the students the nature and the objective of the research, and how to fill out the questionnaire. It was emphasized that the information collected would be used in a confidential manner and that the respondent's personal identity would be kept confidential. The respondents' were allowed to ask questions, if they had any, and were told that their participation in the project as respondents was strictly voluntary.

Overview of the Report

In the following section the data on educational aspiration and the factors related with it are presented for all 960 students. The factors associated with educational aspiration are presented in terms of (1) personal factors, (2) family circumstances and background, (3) factors relating to school experiences and (4) residence location. This is followed by a comparison of male and female respondents in educational aspiration and the factors associated with the differential educational aspirations of male and female high school seniors. In the following section the educational aspirations of the rural and urban high school seniors are compared and the factors associated with the differences in educational aspiration between rural and urban high school seniors are identified. In the final section the findings based on factor analysis are presented in identifying those factors which are associated with the educational aspirations of the high school seniors.

## FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION

The respondents were classified into four categories according to their plans after graduation from high school. The categories were: (1) Uncertain: The student had not yet decided whether to continue his education after high school or to work; (2) Work: The student had decided not to go to college after graduation; instead, the student had decided to work; (3) Vocational: The student had decided to attend a vocational school or technical college after graduation; and (4) University: The student had decided to go to university after graduation from high school. These four categories of after-graduation plans were considered to be the measure of the dependent variable in the present study--the level of educational aspiration of high school seniors. The students who had decided to go to university after graduation were considered to have the highest educational aspirations while those who were uncertain about their plans after graduation were considered to have the lowest educational aspirations; the Work and Vocational categories were considered to be intermediate.

In Table 2, the number and proportion of the respondents who belonged to these four categories of educational aspiration have been presented. It is important to note that the highest

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Levels of Educational Aspiration

| Levels of Educational Aspiration | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Uncertain | 110 | 11.5 |
| Work | 146 | 15.2 |
| Vocational | 169 | 17.6 |
| University | 535 | 55.7 |
| Total | 960 | 100.0 |

proportion of the respondents (55.7 percent) planned to go to university after graduation from high school. In a recent study in Canada, conducted in midnorthern Ontario (Blackburn et al., 1975:3), only 46 percent of the seniors planned to attend university after graduation from high school. Another 18 percent of the respondents in the present study planned to attend a technical or vocational college after graduation. In other words, about three-fourths of the respondents in the present study planned to further their education beyond high school. Only two-thirds of the respondents in the Ontario study planned to continue education after high school. A little over one-fourth of the respondents in the present study (as compared to one-third of the Ontario study) planned to discontinue education after graduation or were uncertain about their future plans.

Personal Factors and Educational Aspiration

Five factors, considered as personal factors, were related to the respondents' educational aspiration. These factors were: sex, age, peer group influence, the respondents' motivation to continue education, and the respondents' occupational aspirations.

Sex. The findings on the relationship between sex and educational aspiration are somewhat inconsistent. For example, Sewell (1964), who cited numerous references of studies conducted

in the United States since 1950 on educational aspiration maintained that male students were much more likely to have high educational aspirations than females, and that he knew of no studies which did not find a larger proportion of boys than girls with high educational aspirations. However, studies have also indicated that rural, especially farm, girls tend to have a higher level of educational aspiration than their male counterparts (Elder, 1963:30-58). The study by Blackburn et al. of a midnorthern Ontario community (1975:8) also reported that proportionately more females from the farm had higher educational aspirations than males from the farm, although proportionately fewer female respondents from villages, towns or cities had higher educational aspirations than their male counterparts. One explanation for this is that rural girls are much more eager than rural boys to move away from home (Boyle, 1966:278)--and a high level of educational achievement helps the rural and farm girls to move from the country to the city.

In the present study, the girls tended to have a higher level of educational aspiration than the boys. A higher proportion of girls than boys planned to attend university or vocational school; a lower proportion of girls than boys were uncertain about their future plans or planned to work after graduation. The chi square value of the relationship was 7.397 which was significant at a .10 level of probability and very close to the .05 level of probability. As will be shown later, both the urban and rural-farm girls had a higher level of educational aspiration than their male counterparts. It was only the rural non-farm boys who had a higher level of educational aspiration than the rural non-farm girls. Although this finding is at variance with the findings of previous studies, most of which showed that boys had a higher level of educational aspiration than girls, it is not very surprising in the context of Prince Edward Island. Here the educational attainment of females has usually been relatively higher than that of males. While the males, especially in the rural areas, tend to discontinue their education and join the labor force at an early age, the females, in a higher proportion, tend to continue their education through the secondary as well as the post-secondary level. The population of the present study had a much higher proportion of female respondents than male respondents. Working school teachers, secretaries, sales-clerks, social workers, nurses and so forth have traditionally been important vocations for those women who desire an occupational career. For those women who desire to have an occupational career, an education beyond the high school level is becoming more and more important. For many of the women on the Island, an education beyond the high school level not only provides the opportunity to have an occupational career but it also enables them to move into the urban centres where such jobs are available.

Table 3. Relationships Between Educational Aspiration and Sex, Age, Peer Group Influence and Motivation to Continue Education (Percent)

| Personal Factors | Educational Aspiration | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Uncertain | Work | Vocational | University | Total | $X^2$ | P< |
| **Sex** | | | | | | | |
| Male | 14.4 | 16.0 | 15.4 | 54.2 | 100 | 7.397 | .10 |
| Female | 9.4 | 14.6 | 19.0 | 56.0 | 100 | | (d.f=3) |
| **Age** | | | | | | | |
| 19 and above | 17.2 | 30.1 | 23.1 | 29.6 | 100 | 72.521 | .001 |
| 18 and below | 10.1 | 11.7 | 16.2 | 62.0 | 100 | | (d.f=3) |
| **Discussion with Peer Group** | | | | | | | |
| None | 22.2 | 18.5 | 7.4 | 51.9 | 100 | 12.231 | .10 |
| Some | 12.2 | 18.0 | 16.9 | 52.9 | 100 | | (d.f=6) |
| Quite a bit | 10.2 | 12.4 | 18.8 | 58.6 | 100 | | |
| **Discussion with an Adult** | | | | | | | |
| None | 16.5 | 17.5 | 14.4 | 51.6 | 100 | 25.287 | .001 |
| Some | 7.6 | 12.7 | 20.5 | 59.2 | 100 | | (d.f.=6) |
| Quite a bit | 9.8 | 17.6 | 16.7 | 55.9 | 100 | | |
| **Motivation to Continue** | | | | | | | |
| Would have dropped out | 25.5 | 30.9 | 10.9 | 32.7 | 100 | 27.164 | .001 |
| Would not have dropped out | 10.5 | 14.0 | 18.3 | 57.2 | | | (d.f=3) |
| **Occupational Expectation** | | | | | | | |
| Professional | 5.1 | 3.4 | 7.9 | 83.7 | 100 | 384.896 | .001 |
| Manager, Proprietor Official, etc. | 15.3 | 24.5 | 15.3 | 44.9 | 100 | | (d.f=21) |
| Clerical and Sales | 11.2 | 31.7 | 41.0 | 16.1 | 100 | | |
| Skilled | 17.4 | 24.6 | 39.1 | 18.8 | 100 | | |
| Semi-skilled | 22.2 | 27.8 | 13.0 | 37.0 | 100 | | |
| Unskilled | 33.3 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100 | | |
| Farmer | 25.0 | 16.7 | 25.0 | 33.3 | 100 | | |
| Other | 27.8 | 18.5 | 14.8 | 38.9 | 100 | | |

Age. The students who were 19 years or older in age tended to have a lower level of educational aspiration than those who were 18 years or younger (Table 3). The chi-square value of the relationship between age and educational aspiration was significant at a .001 level of probability. This was consistent with the findings of the Blackburn et al. Study, who also found a similar relationship. The students who were 19 years or older were perhaps educationally retarded and hence decided to enter the labor force after graduation. For some of them, marriage or prospects for marriage after graduation acted as an influencing factor in their educational plans.

Peer Group Influence. Previous studies have shown that there is a significant relationship between peer group influence and the educational aspirations of high school students (Slocum, 1966:59-62). In the present study, peer group influence was measured by asking the students whether they consulted their friends in making their educational plans. It was expected that the students who discussed their educational plans with their friends would have a higher level of educational aspiration than those who did not discuss their educational plans with their friends. It can be seen from Table 3 that the relationship between these two variables was in the expected direction, although the chi-square value of the relationship was significant at a .10 level of probability and very close to the .05 level of probability. A higher proportion of students who discussed their educational plans with their friends planned to attend university or vocational school than those who did not discuss their educational plans with their peers.

Discussion with an Adult. The respondents were asked whether they discussed their educational plans with an adult at home, in school, or elsewhere, who was in the occupation which the respondent desired to enter. As can be seen from Table 3, there was a definite positive relationship between educational aspiration and discussion with an adult who was in the occupation which the respondent desired to enter. A larger proportion of the respondents who had had a discussion with an adult decided to continue their formal education after graduation than those students who did not discuss their educational plans with an adult. Almost one-third of the latter group of students were either uncertain about their plans or did not want to continue formal education after graduation.

Motivation to Continue Education. It is logical to expect that the students who feel motivated to continue their education would have a higher level of educational aspiration than those who continue to go to school because of perceived pressure from their parents and other members of their households. The respondents were asked whether they would have dropped out of school if they had had the opportunity. It can be seen from Table 3 that the

students who felt that they would have dropped out if they had had the opportunity had a much lower level of educational aspiration than those who said they would have continued to go to school even if they had the opportunity to drop out. This is, in other words, a measure of the respondent's personal motivation to continue his education.

Occupational Expectation. The occupational scale used for the present study was based on the one developed by Pineo and Porter (1973:55-68) for measuring occupational prestige in Canada. The occupations in the present analysis were categorized into eight major types as follows: (1) professional including doctor, lawyer, university lecturer, church minister, teacher and so on; proprietor, manager and official including government official, business executive, those in military service, owners of small businesses, and so forth; clerical and sales including cashier, clerk, bookeeper, insurance, real estate, auto and store salesperson, and work in a small business firm; skilled including mechanic, welder, appliance serviceman and so on; semi-skilled which included fisherman; unskilled including janitor, waiter, truckdriver, plumber's helper and so on; and farmer.

There was a strong positive association between occupational expectation and educational aspiration in the present study. Four-fifths of the respondents who expected a professional occupation, planned to attend university after graduation from high school. Over 44 percent of the students who expected to be managers, proprietors or government officials planned to attend university, and another 15 percent planned to go to vocational school. The students who expected to have a clerical, a sales, or a skilled occupation planned to attend a vocational school in a higher proportion, rather than university. It is interesting to note that one-third of the students who expected semi-skilled occupations, planned to attend university. Only 12 students expected to be farmers, four of whom planned to attend university after graduation.

The chi square value of the relationship between occupational expectation and educational aspiration was 384.896, significant at the .001 level of probability.

## Family Factors and Educational Aspiration

Several studies have reported that there is an important relationship between a student's educational aspiration and his family background. Slocum (1966) found that several family factors, such as the family income and the intellectual tradition of the family, measured in terms of the parents' and siblings' education, positively affected the students' educational aspiration. Similarly, Shill (1968), in his study of rural male high school seniors in Mississippi, found that the students with relatively low educational aspirations were receiving little or no encouragement from their families to

continue their formal education beyond high school. Shill found that the specific data of his study seemed to indicate that the dominant influence in most individuals' educational aspiration was the immediate family. Some families tended to produce a positive influence on the educational aspiration level, whereas others exerted a negative influence. Parents with low educational attainment tended to be more satisfied with their sons' educational level than parents with higher levels of education. Generally, the respondents believed that their parents wanted them to obtain more, but not much more, education than they themselves had received. The exception was found in the group of parents who had completed high school, but who had had no formal education beyond that. These parents tended to have very high educational aspirations for their sons.

Blackburn et al. (1975:8-9) in their study of the educational aspirations of high school students in midnorthern Ontario found that family size, the father's educational attainment and the mother's educational attainment exerted a positive influence on the educational aspirations of their children. Students from smaller families in towns and cities tended to have relatively high educational aspirations although the aspiration levels of farm youths were not related to size of family. Fathers with high educational attainment exerted influence on their children to aspire to high levels of education. Also, children of mothers with a high educational level tended to have high educational aspirations.

In the present study, 12 variables related to the family circumstances of the high school seniors were related to the students' levels of educational aspiration. The variables can be broadly categorized into three types: (1) socio-economic status of the family (Table 4), which included the family income, the ability of the parents to bear the cost of their children's education, the father's occupation and the mother's occupation; (2) intellectual tradition of the family (Table 5), which included the father's education, the mother's education, the oldest brother's education, and the oldest sister's education; and (3) familial encouragement and expectations (Table 6), which included parental expectations, discussion of educational plans with parents, the father's feelings about educational plans and the mother's feelings toward educational plans.

Family Income. Previous studies by sociologists have found socio-economic status to be associated with educational aspiration (Youmans, 1959:21-28; Slocum, 1964:28-30; Shill, 1968:20-21). The respondents in the present study were asked to report their perception of family income or wealth, in relation to family income or wealth in their communities, as above average, average or below average. Table 4 shows the distribution of their responses. The finding on the relationship between family income, as

Table 4. Relationships Between Educational Aspiration and Family Income, Ability of Parents to Help Respondents to Go to College, Father's Occupation, Mother's Occupation (Percent)

| Family Socio-economic Status | Educational Aspiration | | | | Total | $X^2$ | P< |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Uncertain | Work | Vocational | University | | | |
| **Family Income** | | | | | | | |
| Below Average | 7.7 | 19.0 | 11.4 | 61.9 | 100 | | |
| Average | 13.9 | 14.8 | 21.1 | 50.2 | 100 | 34.09 | .01 |
| Above Average | 6.4 | 14.6 | 10.5 | 68.5 | 100 | | (d.f=6) |
| **Ability of Parents to Help** | | | | | | | |
| Respondent must pay own way | 11.6 | 0.0* | 18.8 | 69.6 | 100 | 13.98 | .05 |
| Parent can afford it with sacrifices | 10.0 | 0.0 | 22.2 | 67.8 | 100 | | (d.f=6) |
| Parent can afford to help partly | 8.7 | 0.0 | 19.2 | 72.1 | 100 | | |
| Parent can easily afford it | 6.0 | 0.0 | 22.7 | 71.3 | 100 | | |
| **Father's Occupation** | | | | | | | |
| Professional | 4.4 | 17.4 | 6.5 | 71.7 | 100 | 25.83 | .10 |
| Manager, Proprietor,etc. | 11.1 | 13.9 | 19.4 | 55.6 | 100 | | (d.f=18) |
| Clerical and Sales | 10.6 | 9.4 | 11.8 | 68.2 | 100 | | |
| Skilled | 8.9 | 20.5 | 16.1 | 54.5 | 100 | | |
| Semi-skilled | 8.3 | 22.2 | 16.7 | 52.8 | 100 | | |
| Farmer | 12.2 | 14.0 | 18.4 | 55.4 | 100 | | |
| Unskilled | 14.5 | 18.0 | 24.1 | 43.4 | 100 | | |
| **Mother's Occupation** | | | | | | | |
| Professional | 8.6 | 12.0 | 9.8 | 69.6 | 100 | 27.28 | .10 |
| Manager, Proprietor,etc. | 13.1 | 16.4 | 11.5 | 59.0 | 100 | | (d.f=18) |
| Clerical and Sales | 8.8 | 11.0 | 17.6 | 62.6 | 100 | | |
| Housewife | 12.2 | 16.0 | 17.9 | 53.9 | 100 | | |
| Skilled | 16.7 | 8.3 | 33.3 | 41.7 | 100 | | |
| Unskilled | 11.4 | 14.3 | 20.0 | 54.3 | 100 | | |
| Farmer | 0.0 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 66.7 | 100 | | |

*Respondents who planned to work after graduation were excluded in relating the parents' ability to pay fees and educational aspiration.

perceived by the students, and educational aspiration was consistent with the previous findings. A much higher proportion of the students who came from families with above average incomes planned to attend university than those students from families with average and below average incomes. It is interesting to note that a much higher proportion of the high school seniors who came from families with a below average income planned to attend university than those who came from families with average incomes. However, almost an equal proportion of students from these two categories of income planned to go to university or vocational school after graduation from high school.

Ability of Parents to Help. The students who planned to continue formal education after graduation from high school were asked to estimate their parents' ability to help them go to college. It was expected that those students whose parents could easily afford to help their children go to college would have a higher level of educational aspiration than those who could not or could only afford to help their children with sacrifice. Our finding tends to support this hypothesis (Table 4). There was a positive relationship between the parents' ability to help their children go to college and the level of educational aspiration of the children.

Father's Occupation. The father's occupation could be expected to influence the respondents' level of educational aspiration in two ways: (1) the father's occupation might provide the respondent with an occupational role model which in turn might affect his educational aspiration; (2) the father might influence his children in aspiring for an occupation similar to his or better, which might also affect the level of educational aspiration of his children. The father's occupation might also affect his ability to support his children, fully or partially, if they go to college.

It can been seen from Table 4 that a larger proportion of respondents whose fathers followed occupations which were high in prestige ranking tended to plan to attend university than those whose fathers followed occupations which were low in prestige. The relationship between the respondents' level of educational aspiration and the prestige of their father's occupation, however, was not statistically significant. The chi-square value of the relationship was significant at .10 level of probability. Nevertheless, a much lower proportion of the respondents whose fathers were professionals, proprietors, managers and officials, and clerks or salesmen were uncertain or decided not to continue formal education beyond high school than the respondents whose fathers followed a skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled or farming occupation.

Mother's Occupation. The relationship between the respondents' educational aspirations and their mother's occupation was not statistically significant (Table 4). The chi square value of the relationship was significant at a .10 level of probability. However, as was the case in the father's occupation, the respondents whose mothers followed an occupation which could be classified as a professional, managerial or clerical, and sales occupation tended to plan to attend university in a higher proportion, and were uncertain or planned to discontinue formal education in a lower proportion, than those respondents whose mothers were housewives, or followed a skilled, unskilled or a farming occupation.

Father's Education. It has been found in previous studies that parents who have low educational levels tend to give less encouragement and less financial support to their children than parents who have higher levels of education (Shill, 1968:23). If this is true, children of parents with low educational levels should find it more difficult to attain higher levels of education than children of parents with a higher level of education. This negative influence would most likely affect the children's educational aspirations and abilities. A positive relation between the parents' educational level and their children's educational aspirations has been reported by Slocum (1964:53-56), Shill (1968: 24-25) and Blackburn et al. (1975:9).

The relationship between the respondents' fathers' education and their levels of educational aspiration was highly significant in the present study (Table 5). The difference in aspiration levels between those respondents with highly educated fathers (university graduate) and those with fathers with a formal education of 9 years or less was quite dramatic. Almost four-fifths of the respondents with highly educated fathers (university graduates) planned to attend university compared to only less than fifty percent of those whose fathers had only 9 years or less of formal education.

Mother's Education. As in the case of the father's education, there was a strong positive association between the respondents' mother's education and their level of educational aspiration (Table 5). The relationship was almost as strong as it was in the case of the father's education.

Oldest Brother's and Sister's Education. Another indicator of a family's intellectual tradition is the level of educational attainment of the respondent's older siblings. Slocum (1964: 56-57), for example, reported that there was a statistically significant association between the educational aspirations of the respondents and whether one or more of their brothers and sisters attended college. He also reported a negative association between the educational aspiration of the respondents and whether or not one or more of their siblings dropped out of school.

Table 5. Relationships Between Educational Aspirations and Father's Education, Mother's Education, Oldest Brother's Education and Oldest Sister's Education (Percent)

| Family Variables | Educational Aspiration | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Uncertain | Work | Vocational | University | Total | $X^2$ | P< |
| **Father's Education** | | | | | | | |
| University Graduate | 3.4 | 11.2 | 5.6 | 79.8 | 100 | 52.62 | .001 |
| Attended University | 8.7 | 9.6 | 18.3 | 63.4 | 100 | | (d.f=12) |
| High School Graduate | 17.6 | 14.0 | 8.8 | 59.6 | 100 | | |
| Attended High School | 12.5 | 10.4 | 17.2 | 59.9 | 100 | | |
| 9 Years and Less | 11.1 | 19.1 | 22.0 | 47.8 | 100 | | |
| **Mother's Education** | | | | | | | |
| University graduate | 12.4 | 13.5 | 10.1 | 64.0 | 100 | 40.86 | .001 |
| Attended University | 11.9 | 7.7 | 16.5 | 63.9 | 100 | | (d.f=12) |
| High School graduate | 8.8 | 13.3 | 19.5 | 58.4 | 100 | | |
| Attended High School | 10.1 | 13.2 | 18.8 | 57.9 | 100 | | |
| 9 years and less | 10.8 | 23.9 | 17.9 | 47.4 | 100 | | |
| **Oldest Brother's Education*** | | | | | | | |
| Masters or Ph.D. | 12.0 | 12.0 | 8.0 | 68.0 | 100 | 60.08 | .001 |
| Bachelors Degree | 10.6 | 9.4 | 14.1 | 65.9 | 100 | | (d.f=21) |
| Attended University | 10.4 | 15.7 | 22.6 | 51.3 | 100 | | |
| Attended Trade or Business School | 20.0 | 10.9 | 20.0 | 49.1 | 100 | | |
| High School graduate | 6.4 | 20.2 | 22.3 | 51.1 | 100 | | |
| Above grade 9 | 14.8 | 16.0 | 24.7 | 44.4 | 100 | | |
| Grade 7 to 9 | 11.3 | 33.9 | 16.1 | 38.7 | 100 | | |
| Grade 6 or below | 0.0 | 50.0 | 12.5 | 37.5 | 100 | | |
| **Oldest Sister's Education**** | | | | | | | |
| Masters or Ph.D. | 0.0 | 14.3 | 14.3 | 71.4 | 100 | 71.76 | .001 |
| Bachelors Degree | 13.4 | 11.3 | 18.6 | 56.7 | 100 | | (d.f=21) |
| Attended University | 9.7 | 12.1 | 15.3 | 62.9 | 100 | | |
| Attended Trade or Business School | 13.8 | 14.9 | 18.1 | 53.2 | 100 | | |
| High School graduate | 11.7 | 27.2 | 18.4 | 42.7 | 100 | | |
| Above grade 9 | 21.5 | 30.8 | 10.8 | 36.9 | 100 | | |
| Grade 7 to 9 | 6.5 | 25.8 | 41.9 | 25.8 | 100 | | |
| Grade 6 or below | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100 | | |

* Excludes the respondents who did not have an older brother.
** Excludes the respondents who did not have an older sister.

In the present study, the respondents were asked about the highest level of educational attainment of their oldest brothers and sisters, who were also older than the respondents. It can be seen from Table 5 that the relationships between the respondents' educational aspirations and their oldest brother's and sister's educational attainment was highly significant and was even stronger than the relationship between the respondents' educational aspirations and their parents' educational attainment, as evidenced by the magnitude of the chi square values.

Parental Expectations. In a previous study, Burchinal (1961: 107-121) reported a positive relationship between educational aspiration and parental expectation regarding their son's educational aspirations. Burchinal reported that the students from small towns and large urban centers frequently reported definite encouragement from their parents to continue their education, while the rural boys, especially the farm oriented ones, least frequently reported definite parental encouragement.

Data for the present analysis were obtained from the following item in the questionnaire: "My parents (or guardians): (a) want me to go to college; (b) want me to work; (c) do not care what I do." It was expected that the respondents' educational aspirations would conform to their parents' expectations. It can be seen in Table 6 that there was a very strong association between educational aspiration and parental expectations. Almost two-thirds of the students whose parents wanted them to work, planned to work after graduation from high school; less than one-fifth of these students planned to go to university or a vocational school. It is interesting to note that of the students whose parents were indifferent to their plans, almost one-half decided to go to university or a technical school after graduation. Over four-fifths of the students whose parents wanted them to go to college, planned to attend university or a vocational school after graduation.

Discussion of Educational Plans with Parents. The respondents were asked about the extent to which they had discussed their educational plans with their parents. It can be seen from Table 6 that a higher proportion of the respondents who discussed their plans with their parents decided to go to university or a technical school than those students who did not discuss their plans with their parents.

Parental Feelings About Plan. It can be seen from Table 6 that there was a statistically significant association between the father's and mother's feelings about the respondent's educational plans and the respondent's level of educational aspiration. Almost four-fifths of the students who reported that their fathers were satisfied with their education plans, planned to attend university or vocational school after graduation. Less than

Table 6. Relationships Between Educational Aspirations and Parental Expectations, Discussion of Educational Plans with Parents, Father's and Mother's Feelings about Educational Plan (Percent)

| Family Variables | Educational Aspirations | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Uncertain | Work | Vocational | University | Total | $X^2$ | P< |
| **Parental Expectations** | | | | | | | |
| Go to College | 9.5 | 4.5 | 19.6 | 66.4 | 100 | 342.88 | .001 |
| Indifferent | 18.2 | 33.0 | 13.6 | 35.2 | 100 | | (d.f=6) |
| Go to Work | 14.5 | 65.5 | 8.2 | 11.8 | 100 | | |
| **Discussion of Educational Plan with Parents** | | | | | | | |
| Quite a bit | 8.8 | 14.2 | 20.2 | 56.8 | 100 | 19.515 | .01 |
| Some | 14.9 | 16.2 | 13.8 | 55.1 | 100 | | (d.f=6) |
| None | 24.0 | 24.0 | 12.0 | 40.0 | 100 | | |
| **How Father Feels About Plan** | | | | | | | |
| Satisfied | 6.8 | 13.8 | 20.0 | 59.4 | 100 | 51.88 | .001 |
| Dissatisfied | 34.8 | 17.4 | 13.0 | 34.8 | 100 | | (d.f=6) |
| No Opinion | 19.5 | 19.1 | 12.2 | 49.2 | 100 | | |
| **How Mother Feels About Plan** | | | | | | | |
| Satisfied | 8.2 | 14.4 | 18.7 | 58.7 | 100 | 73.808 | .001 |
| Dissatisfied | 27.9 | 18.6 | 23.3 | 30.2 | 100 | | (d.f=6) |
| No Opinion | 32.7 | 17.3 | 6.1 | 43.9 | 100 | | |

one-half of the students whose fathers were dissatisfied with their plans, decided to continue formal education after graduation.

There was also a strong positive association between the respondents' educational aspirations and their mother's feelings about their plans. It is interesting to point out that the relationship between the mother's feelings and educational aspiration was stronger than the relationship between the father's feelings and educational aspiration, as evidenced by the magnitude of the value of the chi squares as well as the magnitude of the gamma values for the relationship, which were 0.39526 and 0.26466 respectively. That mothers provide more encouragement to their children, especially sons, to continue formal education than do fathers, has been reported in at least two previous studies, Burchinal (1961:118-119) and Shill (1968:29-30).

School Factors and Educational Aspiration

In a previous study in Minnesota, Berdie (1953:352-356) indicated that the family and the home environment had the most determining influence on a student's educational aspiration beyond high school. Berdie maintained that secondary influences came from peers, teachers and non-home factors. Shill (1975:32 - in his Mississippi study also reported similar findings. In his study of the educational aspirations of rural Washington high school seniors, Slocum (1964:62-75) reported that teachers, counselors, subjects chosen for study, and scholastic performances were important school factors which affected educational aspiration. Shill (1975:35-37) found a positive relationship between the subjects chosen, the subjects liked most, and least, as well as scholastic performances, and educational aspiration. Blackburn et al. (1975:9-10) reported a positive relationship between the grade level of the students, focus of program, and academic marks, and educational aspiration.

Three factors related to school experiences were considered in the present study: (1) discussion with the principal or a teacher regarding education beyond high school; (2) discussion with a counselor; and (3) scholastic performance. All of these three factors had been found to be significantly associated with educational aspiration in previous studies.

Discussion with Principal or Teacher. Slocum (1964:63-64) reported a small but statistically significant association between the level of discussion and the degree of educational aspiration. He found that those students who reported that they had discussed their educational plans with one or more teachers were more likely to aspire to go to college.

Table 7. Relationships Between Educational Aspiration and Discussion with Teacher or Principal, Discussion with Counselor and Grade Average (Percent)

| School Factors | Educational Aspiration | | | | Total | $X^2$ | P< |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Uncertain | Work | Vocational | University | | | |
| **Discussion with Teacher or Principal** | | | | | | | |
| Quite a bit | 2.2 | 5.4 | 19.4 | 73.0 | 100 | 59.782 | .001 |
| Some | 9.6 | 12.4 | 18.7 | 59.3 | 100 | | (d.f=6) |
| None | 18.1 | 23.9 | 14.7 | 43.3 | 100 | | |
| **Discussion with Counselor** | | | | | | | |
| Quite a bit | 3.3 | 4.4 | 29.0 | 63.3 | 100 | 109.752 | .001 |
| Some | 11.0 | 12.4 | 16.8 | 59.8 | | | (d.f=9) |
| None | 22.2 | 29.1 | 13.8 | 34.8 | 100 | | |
| No Counselor | 9.2 | 19.0 | 11.0 | 60.8 | 100 | | |
| **Grade Average from Grade 10 through 12** | | | | | | | |
| Above 80 | 0.8 | 3.7 | 4.5 | 91.0 | 100 | 132.427 | .001 |
| 71 - 80 | 7.2 | 11.4 | 14.0 | 67.4 | 100 | | (d.f=9) |
| 60 - 70 | 15.4 | 19.7 | 22.0 | 42.9 | 100 | | |
| Below 60 | 25.0 | 21.9 | 28.1 | 25.0 | 100 | | |

The respondents in the present study were asked whether they had discussed their educational plans with the principal of their school or one or more teachers. It can be seen in Table 7 that there was a highly significant association between discussion with the principal or a teacher and educational aspiration. The students who reported that they had discussed their educational plans with the principal or one or more teachers "quite a bit" or "some" were much more likely to attend university after graduation than the students who did not discuss their plans. Almost three-fourths of the students reporting "quite a bit" of discussion with the principal or a teacher aspired to go to university compared to 59.3 percent for those reporting "some" discussion, and 43.3 percent for those reporting no discussion.

Discussion with Counselor. The level of association between the educational aspirations of the respondents and their discussion of educational plans with a school counselor was also positive (Table 7). It is interesting to note that the students who did not have an opportunity to discuss their educational plans with a counselor because there was no counselor available in their schools, tended to have a high level of educational aspiration. The students who had a counselor available in their schools but who did not discuss their plans with the counselor had a very low level of educational aspiration. Only one-third of these students aspired to go to university compared to 59.8 percent of those reporting "some" discussion with a counselor, and 63.3 percent for those reporting "quite a bit" of discussion with the counselor.

Scholastic Performance. Scholastic performance is an indicator of the intelligence, interest, skill and effort of a student. It also reflects the student's merit and motivation. Several previous studies have found a positive association between the grades received by a student and his educational aspiration. As can be seen from Table 7, the relationship between educational aspiration and the average grade received by the student from grade 10 through 12 was dramatic. The relationship between these two factors was very strong and highly significant. Among the students who received an average grade of over 80 percent, over nine-tenths planned to attend university after graduation. Only one-fourth of the students who received an average grade of less than 60 percent aspired to attend university after graduation. The proportion of students planning to attend university after graduation declined with decreasing grades.

## Location of Residence and Educational Aspiration

Previous studies have indicated that the place of residence has an important influence on the educational aspirations of the young people. A large number of studies by sociologists on educational aspiration have focused on the rural-urban difference

Table 8. Relationship Between Educational Aspiration and Location of Residence (Percent)

| Location of Residence | Educational Aspiration: Uncertain | Work | Vocational | University | Total | $X^2$ | P< |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **County** | | | | | | | |
| Prince | 13.8 | 20.9 | 15.7 | 49.6 | 100 | 27.196 | .001 (d.f=6) |
| Queens | 10.4 | 11.5 | 17.2 | 60.9 | 100 | | |
| Kings | 8.6 | 9.7 | 22.2 | 59.5 | 100 | | |
| **Rural-Urban** | | | | | | | |
| Rural Farm | 10.9 | 18.3 | 17.6 | 53.2 | 100 | 4.178 | N.S. |
| Rural Non-farm | 11.3 | 15.2 | 18.6 | 54.9 | 100 | | |
| Urban | 11.9 | 13.1 | 16.0 | 58.0 | 100 | | |

in educational aspiration. Most of these studies have indicated that the students from a rural-farm background tend to have a lower level of educational aspiration than those from an urban background (for example, see Middleton and Grigg 1959; Burchinal, 1961; Sewell, 1964). Several explanations have been offered for this difference between rural and urban students. Lipset (1955:220-228) has pointed out that children in large cities have greater educational opportunities than those from rural areas. He has also suggested that urban youths are more likely to be acquainted with the variety of occupational opportunities in the city than are those who live in occupationally less heterogeneous small towns and rural areas. Consequently, rural youths have lower occupational aspirations than urban youths and are thus less likely to obtain the education and skills necessary for upward mobility in the non-farm labor market.

A test of Lipset's hypothesis was carried out by Haller and Sewell in Wisconsin (1957:407-411) and they found no significant difference in the occupational aspirations of farm and non-farm males and females; neither was there any significant difference in the educational aspirations of farm and non-farm males or females. Only among the males were plans to attend college related to farm and non-farm residence. Farm boys appeared as likely to aspire to high-status occupations as non-farm boys but were less aware of the educational requirements for achieving these positions. However, Haller and Sewell suggested that caution must be used in generalizing their Wisconsin findings to other places, for in Wisconsin the impingement of urban society upon rural life was relatively great.

Burchinal (1961:109) argued that in communities with high levels of industrialization and which include contiguous rural areas, occupational and educational aspiration may be similar, as was the case in Wisconsin. In these communities, the rural non-farm, farm and urban children and youth attend the same schools and are exposed to many of the same community norms and other influences. On the other hand, if the aspiration levels of youth from rural areas with low levels of industrialization were compared with those of the urban youth, distinct patterns of rural-urban differences would be expected, as was the case with the Florida data of Middleton and Grigg (1959), who found significant rural-urban differences in educational aspiration among the white students, especially the white males, although they failed to find any significant rural-urban difference in the aspirations of Negro students probably because, they argued, the Negros who remain in school through the twelfth grade were a very select group who had uniformly high educational and occupational aspirations regardless of their community of residence. In his study of the educational aspirations among high school students in Green county, Iowa, a county with a low level of industrialization, Burchinal found empirical support for his hypothesis that

metropolitan males had the highest levels of aspiration; rural non-farm and small-town males were next; farm-reared males who planned to enter non-farm occupations were third; and farm-reared males who planned to farm were lowest. Burchinal observed that there was a combination of factors involved in the socialization of the farm youth, whether they planned to farm or not, which depressed their educational aspiration.

Sewell (1964), in his study of high school seniors in Wisconsin, attempted to find out the extent to which rural-urban differences in educational aspiration could be explained in terms of factors known to be differentially associated with community background and also with educational aspiration. He attempted to control the influence of sex, intelligence, and socio-economic status on educational aspiration in comparing the rural and urban students. He found that the community of residence differences were generally eliminated for girls when the effects of these variables were partialled out. For boys, community of residence differences remained after the effects of intelligence and socio-economic status were controlled, especially for those who were highly intelligent and who came from high socio-economic status groups. He observed that the strong pull of farming as an occupational possibility for farm boys and the accompanying belief that college education was not necessary in farming was perhaps one of the main factors for the failure of able rural boys, particularly farm boys, to plan on college. The lack of stable differences between rural and urban girls perhaps resulted from the fact that both rural and urban girls competed for a limited range of occupational opportunities, most of which were available mainly in urban communities. Thus, Sewell maintained, rural girls must orient themselves not to the local but to the urban job market and are as likely as urban girls with similar intelligence and socio-economic status to seek the requisite education.

In his study of the educational aspirations of rural high school seniors in Washington, Slocum (1964:97) found that "traditional farm vs. non-farm differences have disappeared for girls and have apparently been reversed for boys". In other words, the findings in the rural-urban differences in educational aspiration are somewhat inconclusive. The extent of rural-urban differences in educational aspiration might vary with the degree of industrialization and urbanization of a region as well as with other characteristics peculiar to a region (for example, see Schwarzweller, 1973:139-158). Rural-urban differences in educational aspiration is not a phenomenon which can be universally generalized.

In the present study two residential factors, the county of residence, and rural-urban residence, were related to the levels of educational aspiration of the high school seniors.

County of Residence. It can be seen in Table 8 that there was a statistically significant positive association between the county of residence and educational aspiration. The students from Queens county planned to attend university in the largest proportion. Prince county had the lowest proportion of students who aspired to a university education after graduation. The proportion of students from Kings county planning to attend university was almost as high as that of Queens county. When the students planning to attend university or vocational school after graduation were considered together, Kings county comes to the top with 82 percent of its students planning to continue formal education after high school. The corresponding proportion in Queens county was 78 percent, while Prince county came third with only 65 percent. It should be pointed out here that Kings county is least urbanized of the three; Queens county is the most urbanized and Prince county comes second in level of urbanization. In 1971, the proportion of urban residents in the Queens, Prince and Kings counties was 49 percent, 35 percent and 16 percent respectively. In other words, the proportion of the rural-farm population was highest in the Kings county area and lowest in Queens county. It is not surprising that Queens county had the highest proportion of students who planned to go to university, for the only city and the capital of the province, Charlottetown, which had a population of 19,133 in 1971, is located in Queens county along with two large villages contiguous with it, which had a combined population of over 5,000. The only university in the province, as well as the technical college are located in Charlottetown. It is, however, surprising that the proportion of students planning to attend university from Kings county was almost as high as in Queens county, and that Kings county had the highest proportion of students who planned to continue formal education beyond high school.

The relationship between the county of residence and educational aspiration was not significant statistically for the urban male and female respondents; however, the relationship was highly significant for the rural male and female respondents. The proportion of rural male respondents planning to attend university was highest for Kings county (60.0 percent), followed by Queens (59.4 percent) and Prince (51.3 percent) counties. The proportions of rural male respondents planning to attend vocational school were 26.3 percent for Kings county, 12.5 percent for Queens county and 10.0 percent for Prince county. The proportion of rural male seniors planning to work after graduation or undecided about future plans was lowest for Kings (13.8 percent) followed by Queens (28.2 percent) and Prince (38.8). The relationship between county of residence and educational aspiration for rural males was significant at 0.01 level of probability.

The relationship between county of residence and educational aspiration was significant at 0.001 level of probability for the rural females. However, it was the rural female respondents from Queens county who had the highest level of educational aspiration followed by those from Kings and Prince counties. Of the rural female seniors from Queens county, 68.2 percent planned to attend university compared to 58.0 percent from Kings county and 41.4 percent from Prince county. Only 14.1 percent of the rural female respondents from Queens county planned to work or were undecided about their educational plans; the corresponding proportions for Kings and Prince counties were 23.9 and 37.6 percent respectively.

Rural-Urban Residence. As can be seen from Table 8, the proportion of urban students planning to enter university was the highest (58.0 percent) when compared with the rural non-farm (54.9 percent) and the rural farm students (53.2). Similarly, the proportion of students who were planning to work or were uncertain about their plans was highest among rural farm students (29.2 percent) followed by rural non-farm (26.5 percent) and urban students (25.0 percent). However, the association between rural-urban residence and educational aspiration was not statistically significant.

When the association between these two factors was examined by controlling sex, it was found that there was no statistically significant association between rural-urban residence and educational aspiration among the male respondents while for the female respondents the association was statistically significant.

For the male respondents, a higher proportion of rural students (56.5 percent) than urban students (51.6 percent) planned to attend university. Also, the proportion of rural male respondents planning to attend vocational school (15.8 percent) was higher than that of their urban counterparts (14.9 percent). Conversely, the proportion of male respondents who were uncertain or planning to work after graduation was higher among the urban (33.5 percent) than among the rural (27.8 percent) students.

The proportion of urban female respondents planning to attend university (63.2 percent) was much higher than that of the rural female respondents (52.6 percent). A much larger proportion of rural female seniors (28.1 percent) were uncertain or were planning to work than their urban counterparts (18.2 percent). The value of the chi square of the association between rural-urban residence and educational aspiration for the female respondents was 14.80, which was significant at .001 level of probability with 3 degrees of freedom.

In other words, rural-urban residence was an important factor for the female respondents in the present study, but for the male respondents, residence did not seem to have any significant effect. Our findings thus contradict Sewell's finding on the relationship

between sex and educational aspiration among high school seniors in Wisconsin. The lack of significant difference in educational aspiration between urban and rural male respondents in the present study perhaps resulted from the fact that the pull of farming as an occupational possibility is not as strong for the rural high school seniors in Prince Edward Island as it was among the rural high school seniors in Wisconsin. Indeed, only 4 percent of the rural male respondents in the present study expected to take up farming as an occupation. Over one-third of them expected to enter a professional occupation, and another one-fifth wanted to be a business executive, government official or owner of a small business. The occupational expectations of the rural male respondents were very similar to their urban counterparts most of whom also wanted to follow a professional occupation (41 percent), or be a proprietor, business executive or a government official (17 percent). There was no statistically significant difference in occupational expectation between rural and urban male high school seniors.

The rural and urban female respondents not only differed significantly in educational aspiration but also in occupational expectations. Among the urban female respondents, 64.6 percent expected to follow a professional occupation; 5.8 percent wanted to be a business executive, government official or own a small business; 19.1 percent expected to enter occupations designated here as clerical and sales and the remaining 10.6 percent expected to follow a skilled, semi-skilled,or unskilled occupation. The corresponding proportions for the rural female respondents were 55.9, 4.1, 29.2 and 10.1 percents respectively. The chi square value of the difference in occupational expectation was 8.17, significant at 0.05 level of probability, with 3 degrees of freedom. It is interesting to note that a much greater proportion of urban female respondents than of rural female respondents wanted to follow a professional occupation while a greater proportion of rural female respondents than their urban counterparts expected to be in occupations designated here as clerical and sales.

Thus, the lack of difference in educational aspiration between the urban and rural male high school seniors is perhaps explained by the lack of difference in their occupational expectations. Both urban and rural boys in Prince Edward Island compete for the same range of occupational opportunities most of which are available mainly in the urban communities off the Island. For the rural boy in Prince Edward Island,aspiring for an occupation off the farm which will provide him with a reasonably good income and prestige, a university education after high school is perhaps perceived to be the only "way out". For girls, the rural-urban difference in educational aspiration is perhaps largely explained by the differences in occupational expectation. The rural girls, who mostly come from the families of relatively low educational

and income levels when compared with those of the urban girls, were realistic in expecting to take up occupations designated here as clerical and sales in a higher proportion than the urban girls. The chances for a rural girl to go off of the Island and seek occupational opportunities in large urban communities is much less than for her urban counterpart. If a rural girl has to seek an occupation other than teaching and nursing in one of the urban communities on the Island, it probably has to be one of the occupations classified as clerical and sales. An urban girl, who comes from a family with a relatively higher income and educational level, would probably go off of the Island looking for a professional occupation if it is not available on the Island.

## EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION OF MALE AND FEMALE SENIORS

The purpose of this section is to identify the variables which have differential effects on the levels of educational aspiration of male and female high school seniors. In Table 9 a summary of the relationships between personal, family, school and residence variables and the level of educational aspiration of all respondents, and both male and female respondents, have been summarized. The table shows the chi square values of the relationships as well as their levels of significance.

### Personal Factors

Age and educational aspiration were significantly related for all three categories of respondents. The students, whether male or female, who were 18 years or below in age, had a higher level of educational aspiration than those who were 19 years or older. This fact may well be an indication that some of the boys and girls who were 19 years or older in age had had academic troubles or grade failures at some time or other during their school careers.

Discussion with peer groups did not have any significant effect on the educational aspirations of the male and female respondents. However, discussion regarding educational plans with one or more adults who had experience in the occupations the respondents aspired to had a significantly positive effect on the educational aspirations of both boys and girls. Personal motivation to continue education, as indicated by the response to whether the respondents would have dropped out if they could, was also significantly associated with the educational aspirations of both male and female respondents. The level of occupational expectation was also very strongly associated with the level of educational aspiration for the respondents of both sexes.

Table 9. Relationships Between Educational Aspiration and Personal Factors, Family Factors, School Factors and Location of Residence by All, Male and Female Respondents

| Variables | All Respondents | | | Male Respondents | | | Female Respondents | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | $X^2$ | d.f. | P | $X^2$ | d.f. | P | $X^2$ | d.f. | P< |
| **Personal Factors** | | | | | | | | | |
| Age | 72.52 | 3 | .001 | 42.86 | 3 | .001 | 30.40 | 3 | .001 |
| Discussion with Peer Gp. | 12.23 | 6 | .10 | 3.84 | 6 | N.S. | 6.25 | 6 | N.S. |
| Discussion with Adult | 25.28 | 6 | .001 | 16.75 | 6 | .01 | 20.08 | 6 | .001 |
| Motivation to continue | 27.16 | 3 | .001 | 16.04 | 3 | .001 | 13.24 | 3 | .01 |
| Occupational Expectation | 384.89 | 21 | .001 | 148.14 | 24 | .001 | 278.54 | 24 | .001 |
| **Family Factors** | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Income | 34.09 | 6 | .01 | 17.89 | 6 | .01 | 22.6 | 6 | .001 |
| Ability of Parents to Help | 13.98 | 6 | .05 | 20.39 | 9 | .02 | 1.42 | 6 | N.S. |
| Father's Occupation | 25.83 | 18 | N.S. | 15.96 | 21 | N.S. | 28.10 | 21 | N.S. |
| Mother's Occupation | 27.28 | 18 | N.S. | 22.12 | 21 | N.S. | 15.47 | 18 | N.S. |
| Father's Education | 52.62 | 12 | .001 | 29.13 | 15 | .02 | 47.51 | 15 | .001 |
| Mother's Education | 40.86 | 12 | .001 | 18.74 | 15 | N.S. | 37.44 | 15 | .001 |
| Oldest Brother's Education | 66.08 | 21 | .001 | 17.75 | 12 | .10 | 20.50 | 12 | .05 |
| Oldest Sister's Education | 71.76 | 21 | .001 | 23.76 | 12 | .02 | 28.00 | 12 | .01 |
| Parental Expectations | 342.88 | 6 | .001 | 141.52 | 6 | .001 | 215.60 | 6 | .001 |
| Discussion with Parents | 19.51 | 6 | .01 | 6.04 | 6 | N.S. | 10.54 | 6 | .10 |
| How Father Feels | 51.88 | 6 | .001 | 32.26 | 6 | .001 | 27.36 | 6 | .001 |
| How Mother Feels | 73.80 | 6 | .001 | 33.24 | 6 | .001 | 44.60 | 6 | .001 |
| **School Factors** | | | | | | | | | |
| Discussion with Teacher or Principal | 59.78 | 6 | .001 | 41.28 | 6 | .001 | 23.56 | 6 | .01 |
| Discussion with Counselor | 109.75 | 9 | .001 | 52.38 | 9 | .001 | 60.69 | 9 | .001 |
| Grade Average | 132.42 | 9 | .001 | 57.92 | 9 | .001 | 98.35 | 9 | .001 |
| **Location of Residence** | | | | | | | | | |
| County of Residence | 27.19 | 6 | .001 | 20.87 | 6 | .001 | 26.11 | 6 | .001 |
| Rural-Urban Residence | 4.17 | 3 | N.S. | 2.27 | 3 | N.S. | 14.80 | 3 | .001 |

Family Factors

The economic status of the family, as indicated by the students' perception of their family's level of income,was strongly associated with the level of educational aspiration of both the male and female seniors. However, the ability of the parents to help did not appear to have any significant effect on the educational aspirations of the female respondents although the effect of this variable on the educational aspiration of the boys was significant, as well as for the total sample. It should be noted here that the "ability" of the parents was measured here in terms of whether the parents could easily afford to help, could help with some sacrifice, could help partly, or whether the student was to pay his/her own way through school. It is possible that some students felt that they would have to bear the entire cost or part of it even though their parents could afford to pay their total educational expenses.

It is interesting to note that the parents' occupation had no significant effect on the educational aspirations of any of the three categories of respondents. The father's educational level, however, was significantly associated with the educational aspirations of both the boys and girls, although it had a relatively greater effect on the girls' educational aspirations than on the boys. The mother's educational level had a significantly high effect on the educational aspirations of the girls as well as the total sample, but no significant effect on the educational aspiration of the boys.

The oldest brother's and sister's educational levels were significantly associated with the level of educational aspiration of the female respondents as well as for all respondents considered together. The oldest sister's level of education, but not that of the oldest brother's, was significantly associated with the level of educational aspiration of the male respondents, although not as strongly as it was in the case of the female respondents. In other words, the intellectual tradition of the family did not have as high or as significant an effect on the educational aspirations of the female respondents.

Parental expectations as well as parental feelings and approval had a strong association with the level of educational aspiration of both male and female high school seniors. However, whether or not the respondent discussed his or her educational plans with their parents did not have any significant association with the level of educational aspiration of all the respondents considered together.

School Factors

All three factors related to experiences in school were strongly associated with the level of educational aspiration of both male and female respondents. Grade average was obviously a very important factor which influenced the educational aspiration of both boys and girls. Discussion with a counselor was the second most important factor for both male and female seniors. Discussion with the principal or with one or more other teachers in school was also a very important factor for the boys, although not as highly important for the girls.

Location of Residence

County of residence was an important factor in affecting the educational aspirations of the respondents in the present study. It has been shown that the students from Queens county had the highest level of educational aspiration, closely followed by those from Kings county. The students from Prince county had the lowest level of educational aspiration. However, when compared in terms of the sex of the respondents, it was found that the male respondents from Kings county had the highest level of educational aspiration. Over 86 percent of the male respondents from Kings county planned to attend university (59.5 percent) or vocational school (26.6 percent) after graduation compared to only 68.5 percent of the male respondents from Queens county who aspired to go to university (53.1 percent) or vocational school (15.4 percent), and only 62.2 percent of the male respondents from Prince county who wanted to go to university (52.6 percent) or vocational school (9.6 percent) after graduation.

Among the female respondents, the largest proportion planning to attend university (67.2 percent or vocational school (18.6 percent) were from Queens county, followed by those from Kings county (59.4 percent and 18.9 percent respectively) and Prince county (47.8 percent and 19.5 percent respectively).

As discussed in the preceding section, rural-urban residence had no significant effect on the educational aspirations of the male respondents although the female respondents from urban communities had a significantly higher level of educational aspiration than those from rural communities.

In summary, the factors affecting the levels of educational aspiration were not very different for the male and female respondents. The influence of personal factors was very similar both for male and female respondents. The variables related to family circumstances were also important in affecting the educational aspirations of the male and female respondents. However, family factors had a stronger influence on the educational aspirations of the female respondents than for the male

respondents. The variables related to school experience had an almost identical influence on the level of educational aspiration of the male and female seniors. Location of residence appeared to have a differential influence on male and female seniors. Although both male and female respondents from Prince county had the lowest level of educational aspiration, the male seniors from Kings county and the female seniors from Queens county had the highest levels of educational aspiration among the male and female respondents respectively. Rural or urban residence did not appear to have any significant influence on the educational aspiration of the male seniors. Female seniors from urban communities tended to have a signficantly higher level of educational aspiration than their rural counterparts.

## EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION OF RURAL AND URBAN SENIORS

The purpose of this section is to examine whether the variables considered in this study had differential effects on the educational aspirations of the rural and urban seniors. In Table 10 the relationships between educational aspiration and the variables related to personal factors, family circumstances and norms, experiences in school and location of residence have been summarized. The table shows the chi square values of the relationships and their levels of significance.

### Personal Factors

As can be seen from Table 10, the sex of the respondent was significantly associated with his or her level of educational aspiration for the total and the urban samples; for the rural sample, the association was not significant. The female respondents had a significantly higher level of educational aspiration than the male respondents, both for the total and the urban sample. On the other hand, although a higher proportion of rural male respondents (56.5 percent) than rural female respondents (52.6 percent) planned to attend university after graduation from high school, the difference was not statistically significant.

The associations between the level of educational aspiration and age, discussion with one or more adults who had experience in the occupation aspired for by a respondent, motivation to continue education, and occupational expectations, were statistically significant for both rural and urban high school seniors. Although the association between the level of educational aspiration and discussion with peer group was statistically significant for the urban respondents, the association was not statistically significant for the rural respondents.

### Family Factors

The relationship between family income and educational aspiration was especially strong for the urban respondents; for

Table 10. Relationships Between Educational Aspiration and Personal Factors, Family Factors, School Factors and County of Residence by All, Rural and Urban Respondents

| Variables | All Respondents | | | Rural Respondents | | | Urban Responents | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | $X^2$ | d.f. | P | $X^2$ | d.f. | P | $X^2$ | d.f. | P< |
| **Personal Factors** | | | | | | | | | |
| Sex | 13.59 | 3 | .01 | 1.71 | 3 | N.S. | 13.59 | 3 | .01 |
| Age | 72.52 | 3 | .001 | 15.72 | 3 | .001 | 78.05 | 3 | .001 |
| Discussion with Peer Gp. | 12.23 | 6 | .10 | 4.35 | 6 | N.S. | 14.42 | 6 | .02 |
| Discussion with Adult | 25.28 | 6 | .001 | 18.64 | 6 | .01 | 11.85 | 6 | .10 |
| Motivation to Continue | 27.16 | 3 | .001 | 15.38 | 3 | .001 | 15.38 | 3 | .001 |
| Occupational Expectation | 384.89 | 21 | .001 | 234.85 | 24 | .001 | 174.32 | 24 | .001 |
| **Family Factors** | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Income | 31.09 | 6 | .01 | 12.97 | 6 | .05 | 25.81 | 6 | .001 |
| Ability of Parents to Help | 13.98 | 6 | .05 | 3.62 | 6 | N.S. | 14.76 | 9 | N.S. |
| Fathers Occupation | 25.83 | 18 | N.S. | 12.57 | 21 | N.S. | 34.06 | 21 | .02 |
| Mother's Occupation | 27.28 | 18 | N.S. | 16.33 | 21 | N.S. | 20.83 | 21 | N.S. |
| Father's Education | 52.62 | 12 | .001 | 30.21 | 15 | .01 | 30.34 | 15 | .01 |
| Mother's Education | 40.86 | 12 | .001 | 28.59 | 15 | .02 | 25.19 | 15 | .05 |
| Oldest Brother's Education | 60.08 | 21 | .001 | 22.00 | 12 | .05 | 21.79 | 12 | .05 |
| Oldest Sister's Education | 71.76 | 21 | .001 | 25.87 | 12 | .01 | 13.81 | 12 | N.S. |
| Parental Expectations | 342.88 | 6 | .001 | 219.25 | 6 | .001 | 126.42 | 6 | .001 |
| Discussion with Parents | 19.51 | 6 | .01 | 7.30 | 6 | N.S. | 33.11 | 6 | .001 |
| How Father Feels | 51.88 | 6 | .001 | 33.64 | 6 | .001 | 24.12 | 6 | .001 |
| How Mother Feels | 73.80 | 6 | .001 | 38.66 | 6 | .001 | 42.07 | 6 | .001 |
| **School Factors** | | | | | | | | | |
| Discussion with Teacher or Principal | 59.78 | 6 | .001 | 34.23 | 6 | .001 | 27.34 | 6 | .001 |
| Discussion with Counselor | 109.75 | 9 | .001 | 51.26 | 9 | .001 | 65.53 | 9 | .001 |
| Grade Average | 132.42 | 9 | .001 | 73.83 | 9 | .001 | 64.66 | 9 | .001 |
| **Location of Residence** | | | | | | | | | |
| County of Residence | 27.19 | 6 | .001 | 26.56 | 6 | .001 | 6.91 | 6 | N.S. |

the rural respondents, however, the relationship was significant at .05 level of probability.

Although there was a significant positive association between parents' ability (and perhaps willingness) to pay for educational expenses and educational aspiration (at .05 level of probability) for the total sample, the relationship between these two variables was not significant when urban and rural respondents were considered separately.

Parental occupations did not appear to have any significant influence on the educational aspirations of the respondents, whether rural or urban, except for the father's occupation, which had a significant association with the educational aspiration of the urban respondents. Parental education, however, was highly related with the educational aspirations of the rural and urban respondents; the educational levels of the oldest brother and sister of the respondent, where applicable, also had a significantly positive effect on the educational aspiration of the respondents although the relationship between the oldest sisters' education and educational aspiration was not statistically significant for the urban respondents.

Parental expectations regarding the respondents' education and parental feelings about the respondents' educational plans were all very strongly associated with the respondents' level of educational aspiration. Whether or not the respondents discussed their plans with their parents before deciding their educational plans had a significant effect on the educational aspiration of the urban respondents, but not on the aspirations of the rural respondents.

School Factors

All those variables related to experiences in school strongly affected the level of educational aspiration of both rural and urban respondents. Grade average was the most important factor of the three as evidenced by the chi square values. Discussion with the counselor was the second most important factor. Discussion with the Principal or one or more teachers in the school regarding the respondent's educational plans was also a very important factor.

County of Residence

The county of residence had an important effect on the educational aspirations of the rural respondents. Of the rural respondents who planned to attend university, Queens county included the highest proportion (64.4 percent) as compared to those from Kings (58.8 percent) and Prince (44.7 percent) counties. However, when the respondents who planned to attend

university and those who planned to attend vocational school after graduation were considered together, it was found that the rural respondents from Kings county had the highest percentage (80.4 percent) followed by those from Queens (79.8 percent) and Prince (62.0 percent) counties.

For the urban students, the county of residence did not appear to have any significant effect on their educational aspirations. It is interesting to note that the urban students from Kings county had the highest proportion of students who planned to attend university (62.5 percent), compared to those from Queens (58.5 percent) and Prince (56.5 percent) counties. However, the urban students from Kings county accounted for only 7.6 percent of the total number of urban respondents in the present study. The corresponding proportions for Queens and Prince counties were 51.8 percent and 40.6 percent, respectively.

## EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION BY SEX AND RESIDENCE

The respondents could be categorized into four sub-groups when sex and rural-urban residence were considered together. These four sub-groups were: urban-male, rural-male, urban-female, and rural-female. In Table 11, the relationships between educational aspiration, and the variables related to personal factors, family circumstances and norms, school experiences and county of residence by sex and rural-urban residence have been summarized.

### Personal Factors

The respondents who were 19 years or older in age had a significantly lower level of educational aspiration than those who were 18 years or younger in age regardless of their sex or rural-urban residence. Discussion with friends regarding educational plans did not have any significant influence on educational aspiration when the four sub-groups were considered separately. It is interesting to note that the discussion of educational plans with one or more adults who had experiences in the occupations aspired for by the respondents did not have any significant association with educational aspiration when urban-male and urban-female respondents were considered separately, although the effect of this variable on educational aspiration was significant when all the urban respondents were considered together (Table 10). Discussion with one or more adults continued to have a significant association with the educational aspirations of rural-male and rural-female respondents (Table 11). This finding probably reflects the fact that the urban male and female respondents, who came largely from families where the father was a proprietor, manager or official, or a professional (50.2 percent), were knowledgeable about the occupations they aspired for and had very little need to discuss their educational plans with adults outside of the family who had experience in such occupations. On the

Table 11. Relationships Between Educational Aspiration and Personal Factors, Family Factors, School Factors and County of Residence by Sex and Rural-Urban Residence

| Variables | Respondents | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | | | | | | Female | | | | | |
| | Urban | | | Rural | | | Urban | | | Rural | | |
| | $X^2$ | d.f. | P | $X^2$ | d.f. | P | $X^2$ | d.f. | P | $X^2$ | d.f. | P |
| **Personal Factors** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Age | 49.21 | 3 | .001 | 8.59 | 3 | .05 | 27.53 | 3 | .001 | 11.10 | 3 | .01 |
| Discussion with Peer Group | 6.01 | 6 | N.S. | 2.67 | 6 | N.S. | 9.62 | 6 | N.S. | 5.17 | 6 | N.S. |
| Discussion with Adult | 7.21 | 6 | N.S. | 16.46 | 6 | .01 | 10.45 | 6 | N.S. | 12.86 | 6 | .05 |
| Motivation to Continue | 13.87 | 3 | .001 | 5.88 | 3 | N.S. | 2.19 | 3 | N.S. | 13.06 | 3 | .01 |
| Occupational Expectations | 79.84 | 24 | .001 | 87.91 | 24 | .001 | 97.12 | 15 | .001 | 189.99 | 24 | .001 |
| **Family Factors** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Income | 16.52 | 6 | .01 | 8.57 | 6 | N.S. | 14.10 | 6 | .02 | 10.17 | 6 | N.S. |
| Ability of Parents to Help | 14.70 | 9 | N.S. | 7.26 | 6 | N.S. | 2.37 | 6 | N.S. | 2.55 | 6 | N.S. |
| Father's Occupation | 17.54 | 21 | N.S. | 10.92 | 21 | N.S. | 36.94 | 21 | .02 | 14.08 | 21 | N.S. |
| Mother's Occupation | 26.62 | 21 | N.S. | 11.31 | 21 | N.S. | 26.30 | 18 | N.S. | 16.81 | 18 | N.S. |
| Father's Education | 24.16 | 15 | .05 | 17.42 | 15 | N.S. | 28.37 | 15 | .02 | 37.38 | 15 | .001 |
| Mother's Education | 15.87 | 15 | N.S. | 21.04 | 15 | N.S. | 25.76 | 15 | .05 | 20.96 | 15 | N.S. |
| Oldest Brother's Education | 32.98 | 21 | .05 | 37.75 | 24 | .05 | 25.97 | 21 | N.S. | 26.70 | 27 | N.S. |
| Oldest Sister's Education | 32.94 | 21 | .05 | 34.19 | 24 | N.S. | 31.38 | 21 | .05 | 34.90 | 18 | .01 |
| Parental Expectations | 74.48 | 6 | .001 | 77.40 | 6 | .001 | 65.02 | 6 | .001 | 147.77 | 6 | .001 |

Table 11 (Continued).

| Variables | Respondents | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | | | | | | Female | | | | | |
| | Urban | | | Rural | | | Urban | | | Rural | | |
| | $X^2$ | d.f. | P | $X^2$ | d.f. | P | $X^2$ | d.f. | P | $X^2$ | d.f. | P< |
| Family Factors (cont) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Discussion with Parents | 17.19 | 6 | .01 | 8.45 | 6 | N.S. | 12.91 | 6 | .05 | 2.82 | 6 | N.S. |
| How Father Feels | 12.20 | 6 | .05 | 33.14 | 6 | .001 | 17.56 | 6 | .01 | 14.22 | 6 | .02 |
| How Mother Feels | 33.11 | 6 | .001 | 13.61 | 6 | .05 | 17.38 | 6 | .01 | 39.77 | 6 | .001 |
| School Factors | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Discussion with Teacher or Principal | 25.03 | 6 | .001 | 18.21 | 6 | .01 | 7.63 | 6 | N.S. | 17.25 | 6 | .01 |
| Discussion with Counselor | 43.30 | 9 | .001 | 15.93 | 9 | .05 | 25.33 | 9 | .001 | 39.57 | 9 | .001 |
| Grade Average | 36.36 | 9 | .001 | 24.44 | 9 | .01 | 33.73 | 9 | .001 | 69.27 | 9 | .001 |
| Location of Residence | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| County of Residence | 5.90 | 6 | N.S. | 15.75 | 6 | .01 | 4.41 | 6 | N.S. | 22.90 | 6 | .001 |

other hand, very few of the rural respondents came from families where the father followed a professional occupation or such occupations as proprietor, manager or official (20.5 percent). Consequently, the rural male and female respondents with high educational aspirations tended to discuss their educational plans with one or more adults outside of the family who had experience in the occupations they aspired for.

Motivation to continue education was significantly associated with the level of educational aspiration of the urban-male and rural-female respondents, while it had no significant effect on the educational aspirations of the rural-male and urban-female respondents. It is interesting to note that the urban females and the rural males ranked first and second, respectively, in their level of educational aspiration; the rural-females and the urban-males respectively ranked third and fourth. The proportion of respondents who planned to attend university after graduation was 63.2 percent for urban-females, 56.5 percent for rural-males, 52.6 percent for rural-females, and 51.6 percent for urban-males. The proportion of respondents who planned to continue formal education after high school, that is those who planned to attend university or vocational school, was 81.8 percent, 72.3 percent, 71.9 percent and 66.5 percent for urban-female, rural-male, rural-female, and urban-male respectively. It will be shown in the following that the variables related to family circumstances and norms had a highly significant effect on the educational aspirations of the urban-females, but not as great an effect on the educational aspirations of urban-males. One possible explanation of this finding is that the urban-male respondents, perhaps the most sophisticated and knowledgeable of the four sub-groups, were relatively more realistic regarding their evaluation of the usefulness of a university education in ensuring occupational mobility. Their educational aspiration perhaps also reflected some skepticism on their part regarding the prestige and utility of the occupations that the middle-class urban students have traditionally aspired for. On the other hand, the urban-female respondents strongly perceived the need for a university education to enter a high-status occupation. The occupational expectations of the urban-female respondents reflected a great urge on their part to have a career in a professional occupation.

Relatively high educational aspirations on the part of the rural-male respondents perhaps reflected their desire to get out of farming and related rural occupations and enter occupations for which there was a need for a university education. As shown in the preceding, a large proportion of rural students desired to enter a high status and a relatively high income occupation. The occupational expectations of the rural-male students were rather unrealistic and perhaps reflected some degree of naivete on their part in view of the fact that over two-thirds of them received a grade average of only 70 percent or below. The

rural-male students perceived, perhaps unrealistically, almost an automatic entry to a high status occupation after they received a university education. A relatively large number of rural-female students expected to enter an occupation in "Clerical and Sales" and thus, perhaps, felt that a university education was not necessary.

If the above argument is acceptable then it explains why motivation to continue had no significant effect on the educational aspirations of urban-females and rural-males. Both of these groups perhaps felt that an education was necessary for occupational success even though many of them also felt that if they could they would have dropped out of school. For the urban females, as will be seen in the following, intellectual tradition in the family and parental pressures were very important factors in aspiring for a high level of education. For the rural males, the economic circumstances of a rural community life was perhaps a very important pressure to seek an occupation for which a university education was necessary. On the other hand, for the urban males and rural females, those who thought that they would have dropped out of school if they could, also had a relatively low level of educational aspiration. External pressures, whether familial or economic, did not seem to have as great an effect on the educational aspirations of the urban-males and rural-females as it perhaps had on the urban-females and the rural males. However, occupational expectation had a significantly high positive effect on the educational aspirations of all four groups. In other words, high occupational expectations and high educational aspirations were significantly associated regardless of sex or the rural-urban residence of the respondents.

Family Factors

Family income was significantly important for the level of educational aspiration of the urban males and females, but it had no significant influence on the educational aspiration of the rural males and females. Ability (or willingness) of the parents to help in paying for education beyond high school had no significant influence on educational aspiration when the four groups were considered separately.

Parental occupations had no significant effect on the educational aspirations of the four sub-groups except for the father's occupation, which had a significant influence on the educational aspiration of the urban-females. The father's education was important for all sub-groups with the exception of the rural-males. But the mother's education had no significant effect on the educational aspiration of any of the sub-groups with the exception of the urban-females. Interestingly enough, the oldest brother's education significantly affected the educational aspirations of the urban and rural male respondents but not the

aspirations of the urban and rural female respondents. However the oldest sister's level of education significantly affected the educational aspiration of all sub-groups excepting the rural-males.

Parental expectations and parental feelings about educational plans were significantly associated with the level of educational aspiration of all the four sub-groups. Discussion of educational plans with parents, however, had no significant effect on the educational aspirations of the rural male and female respondents. The rural respondents, as noted in the preceding, tended to discuss their educational plans with one or more adults outside of the family who had experience in those occupations which the rural male and female respondents aspired to. Very few of the parents of the rural respondents followed the occupations or had the experience in the occupations the rural respondents wished to enter.

In summary, the variables related to family circumstances and norms had a greater effect on the urban-female and rural-female respondents than on the urban-male and rural-male respondents. These variables had the greatest influence on the educational aspirations of the urban-female respondents and the least influence on the rural-male respondents. The intellectual tradition of the family and parental feelings and expectations acted as a great pressure on the urban-females to be motivated to aspire and achieve both in education and occupation.

For the rural males, who mostly came from families which had a relatively low income, educational, and occupational levels, the pressures and forces which affected their motivation had to come from outside of the family.

School Factors

The variables related to school experiences were highly associated with the level of educational aspiration of the respondents who belonged to all the four sub-groups, although discussion with the principal or one or more teachers in the school had no significant influence on the educational aspiration of the urban females.

County of Residence

County of residence was significantly associated with the educational aspirations of the rural-male and rural-female respondents, but not with the educational aspirations of the urban male and urban-female respondents. As pointed out in the preceding, the rural-male respondents from Kings county had the highest level of educational aspiration followed by those from Queens and Prince counties. For the rural females, the respondents from Queens county had the highest level of educational aspiration followed by those from Kings and Prince counties.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

It has been shown in the preceding sections that several factors were associated with the level of educational aspiration of the high school seniors in the present study. Personal factors such as age, motivation to continue education, occupational expectation and discussion with one or more adults who had experience in the occupations the respondents expected to enter, were significantly associated with the students' levels of educational aspiration. However, sex and discussion with peer groups had no significant relationship with educational aspiration when all respondents were considered together. The intellectual tradition of the respondent's family, measured in terms of the educational levels of the father, mother, oldest brother and oldest sister, also had a strong positive relationship with educational aspiration. Of the four variables which were related to the socio-economic status of the respondent's family, only two, family income and the parent's ability to help, were significantly associated with educational aspiration. Similarly, parental feelings and expectations also appeared to have a significant influence on the educational aspirations of the high school seniors in the present study. The occupational levels of the parents did not appear to have significant association with educational aspiration when all respondents were considered together, regardless of their sexual status or rural-urban residence. The factors related to school experiences, such as grade average, discussion of educational plans with the principal, one or more teachers, or a counselor, were also associated strongly with the level of educational aspiration. Finally, of the two variables related to the residence of the respondents--county of residence and rural-urban residence--the former had a significant relationship and the latter had no significant relationship with the level of educational aspiration of the respondents.

When the level of educational aspiration of the male and female respondents was compared, it was found that personal factors, family factors and school factors had a very similar influence on the educational aspirations of both groups of respondents, although family factors tended to have a greater influence on the level of educational aspiration of the female respondents than on the level of educational aspiration of the male respondents. However, both county of residence and rural-urban residence tended to have differential influences on the educational aspirations of the male and female respondents. The male respondents from Kings county appeared to have the highest level of educational aspiration while the female respondents from Queens county also tended to have the highest level of educational aspiration. Both the male and female respondents from Prince county had the lowest levels of educational aspiration. Rural-urban residence did not appear to have any significant influence on the educational aspirations

of the male respondents. However, the female respondents from urban communities tended to have a significantly higher level of educational aspiration than their rural counterparts.

When compared in terms of rural-urban residence, it was found that age, motivation to continue, discussion of educational plans with one or more adults and occupational expectation, were all positively associated with the educational aspirations of both rural and urban students. Among the urban respondents, the female seniors tended to have a significantly higher level of educational aspiration than their male counterparts. For the rural respondents, no such significant difference between the male and female respondents was observed. Discussion of educational plans with one or more friends had a significant influence on the educational aspiration of the urban students but not of the rural students. However, discussion of educational plans with one or more adults, motivation to continue education and occupational expectation were all significantly associated with the level of educational aspiration of both rural and urban seniors. Of the four factors associated with the socio-economic status of the families the respondents came from, parental occupations and the ability of the parents to help pay for educational expenses had no significant association with the educational aspirations of the rural and urban respondents although the level of family income had a significant influence on the educational aspiration of both groups. The intellectual tradition in the family, measured in terms of the educational levels of the parents and the oldest siblings in the family, however, was significantly associated with the level of educational aspiration of both the rural and urban students, with the exception of the oldest sister's educational level and discussion of educational plans with parents, neither of which had any significant association with the level of educational aspiration of the urban and rural respondents, respectively. All three school factors were strongly associated with the educational aspirations of the urban and rural seniors. County of residence had a significant influence on the educational aspiration of the rural students but not on the educational aspiration of the urban students.

Urban females had the highest level of educational aspiration followed by rural males, rural females and urban males. While there was a statistically significant difference between the urban females and males in educational aspiration, the difference between rural males and females was not statistically significant. Similarly, the difference in educational aspiration between urban females and rural females was statistically significant, but the difference between rural males and urban males was not significant. It is interesting to point out that the occupational expectations of the urban females were significantly higher than those of their rural counterparts, but the difference in occupational expectations between urban males and rural males was not statistically significant.

When compared in terms of the factors associated with educational aspiration, it was found that age and occupational expectation were the only factors which significantly influenced the educational aspirations of all four groups of students. Discussion of educational plans with one or more friends had no significant association with the educational aspiration of any of the four groups. Discussion with one or more adults was significantly associated with the educational aspiration of the rural males and females but not of the urban males and females. Motivation to continue education did not have any significant effect on the urban females and the rural males.

Factors relating to the socio-economic status of the families the students came from did not have any significant association with the educational aspirations of the rural males and rural females. For the urban respondents, family income was a significant factor for both males and females, as was the father's occupation for the females alone. The intellectual tradition of the family was significantly important for the urban boys and girls, although the mother's education and the oldest brother's education had no significant association with the educational aspiration of the urban males and females, respectively. For the rural males, the oldest brother's education , and for the rural females, the father's and oldest sister's education were the only factors which were associated with their level of educational aspiration. All the variables related to parental expectations and feelings were strongly associated with the educational aspirations of the urban males and females. The same finding was also true for the rural males and females except for one variable--discussion of educational plans with parents--which did not have a significant association with their level of educational aspiration.

All three variables related to school factors were significantly associated with the level of educational aspiration of the four groups of respondents. County of residence was significantly associated with the educational aspirations of the rural males and females but not of the urban males and females.

## FACTORS IN EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION

The above findings thus show the importance and influence of several contextual variables relating to personal circumstances, family, school, and community, on the educational aspirations of the respondents in the present study. While the majority of these variables had a significant association with the educational aspirations of all high school seniors considered together, a significant number of the variables tended to have a differential effect on educational aspiration when the respondents were differentiated in terms of sex and rural-urban residence. However, one of the shortcomings of the preceding analysis was that it failed to identify the variables which were <u>independently</u> associated

with the respondent's level of educational aspiration. In other words, no attempt has been made in the preceding analysis to examine the relationship of each of the variables to educational aspiration, independent of the other variables. Since several of these variables are themselves interrelated, it is possible that the relationship of several of these variables with educational aspiration is accounted for by others. Is, for example, the relationship of grade average with educational aspiration spurious to the extent that this relationship is actually accounted for by the income and educational level of the parents? In other words, it is important to reduce the large number of variables considered in the preceding analysis into a few important ones which have independent relationships with the level of educational aspiration of the respondents. It is also important to find out whether there is a common underlying element or factor in these important variables which makes them influence the respondents' level of educational aspiration.

The technique of factor analysis enables the researcher to reduce the number of independent variables into a few crucial ones, and to identify the underlying factors characterizing these independent variables which explain the nature and magnitude of their relationships with the dependent variable (that is, in our case, the level of educational aspiration). Factor analysis has been developed as a technique to be primarily utilized as a means of ascertaining underlying traits or latent variables (the factors); these are characteristics of individuals which can not be measured directly but which do affect suitably chosen variables which can be measured or observed (Anderson, 1963:7). There, are however, several ways to extract "factors" (underlying traits), and Thurston's (1947) centroid method of factor analysis is perhaps the most common technique used in sociological analysis. The method of factor analysis used here was developed by Rao (Harmon, 1976:218-20), and is available on the SPSS program package. Basically, factor analysis enables the researcher to organize the independent variables into a number of clusters, and each cluster is characterized by an underlying trait or "factor". One or more "factors" thus identified provide the basis for inferences about causal factors which explain the observed differences in the dependent variable.

Variables Considered

Most of the independent variables discussed in the preceding analysis were also considered for the purpose of factor analysis. These were: age, discussion with peer group, and discussion with an adult (Personal Factors); family income, ability of parents to help, father's occupation, father's education, mother's education, oldest brother's education, oldest sister's education, parental expectations, and discussion with parents (Family Factors); discussion with principal, teacher or counselor, and

grade average (School Factors); and county of residence, and rural-urban residence (Locality of Residence). Sex, motivation to continue education, mother's occupation and parental feelings about educational plans were not considered for the purpose of factor analysis. The inter-correlation matrix of the independent variables have been presented in Table 12. The variables are presented in the table in the following manner: (1) county of residence, (2) age, (3) discussion with principal, teacher or counselor, (4) discussion with parents, (5) parental expectation, (6) discussion with peer group, (7) discussion with adult, (8) rural-urban residence, (9) grade average, (10) father's education, (11) mother's education, (12) oldest brother's education, (13) oldest sister's education, (14) father's occupation, (15) family income, and (16) ability of parents to help.

Factor Analysis

The factors were extracted by using Rao's method of Cannonical Factor analysis. The results of the factor analysis have been presented in Table 13. The table shows the factor loadings obtained for four factors. Across each row in the table the "factor loadings" show the net correlation between the factor in question and the indicated variable. For example, the net correlation between Factor 1 and the ability of the parents to help the respondents go through college was 0.78. The Communality Co-efficient of a variable indicates the proportion of the total variation in each variable explained by all factors combined together. In other words, the sum of the squares of the factor loadings on a particular variable constitutes its Communality Coefficient.

The matrix of factor loadings, in addition to indicating the weight of each factor in explaining the observed variables, also provides the basis for grouping the variables into common factors. A variable is allocated to the Factor with which it is most highly correlated, i.e., where its loading is maximal, measured in absolute value. Thus, eight variables loaded most heavily onto Factor 1, two variables onto Factor 2, three onto Factor 3, and three onto Factor 4. These sets of variables are blocked out for each Factor in Table 13.

As can be seen from Table 13, the Communality Coefficient of the educational aspirations of high school seniors was 0.871, i.e., 87.1 percent of the variation in educational aspiration of the respondents in the present study could be explained by the four factors extracted. Factor 1 accounted for 69.6 percent of the variation in educational aspiration; an additional 11.6 percent was explained by Factor 2; another 3.4 percent by Factor 3; and the net contribution of Factor 4 was only 2.5 percent in explaining the variation in educational aspiration.

Table 12. Inter-Correlation Matrix of the Variables

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1.00 | 0.07 | -0.07 | -0.04 | 0.06 | -0.02 | 0.03 | 0.17 | 0.04 | 0.12 | 0.04 | 0.10 | 0.05 | 0.19 | 0.11 | 0.18 |
| 2 | 0.07 | 1.00 | 0.01 | -0.19 | -0.24 | -0.22 | 0.00 | 0.18 | -0.27 | -0.03 | -0.06 | 0.04 | -0.08 | 0.07 | -0.07 | -0.28 |
| 3 | -0.07 | 0.01 | 1.00 | 0.26 | 0.16 | 0.08 | 0.23 | 0.04 | 0.17 | 0.10 | 0.07 | -0.12 | -0.11 | 0.08 | 0.09 | 0.15 |
| 4 | -0.04 | -0.19 | 0.26 | 1.00 | 0.15 | 0.24 | 0.09 | 0.06 | 0.12 | 0.11 | 0.13 | -0.17 | -0.03 | 0.16 | 0.12 | 0.18 |
| 5 | 0.06 | -0.24 | 0.16 | 0.15 | 1.00 | 0.16 | 0.10 | 0.04 | 0.23 | 0.08 | 0.07 | -0.07 | -0.04 | 0.10 | 0.06 | 0.38 |
| 6 | -0.02 | -0.22 | 0.08 | 0.24 | 0.16 | 1.00 | 0.19 | -0.02 | 0.10 | 0.07 | 0.07 | -0.11 | 0.01 | 0.09 | 0.01 | 0.02 |
| 7 | 0.03 | 0.01 | 0.23 | 0.09 | 0.10 | 0.19 | 1.00 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.07 | 0.01 | 0.02 | -0.06 | 0.07 | 0.04 | 0.11 |
| 8 | 0.17 | 0.18 | 0.04 | 0.06 | 0.04 | -0.02 | 0.01 | 1.00 | 0.14 | 0.23 | 0.05 | -0.05 | 0.02 | 0.66 | 0.15 | 0.06 |
| 9 | 0.04 | -0.27 | 0.17 | 0.12 | 0.23 | 0.10 | 0.01 | 0.14 | 1.00 | 0.21 | 0.12 | -0.06 | -0.06 | 0.14 | 0.13 | 0.23 |
| 10 | 0.12 | -0.03 | 0.10 | 0.11 | 0.08 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.23 | 0.21 | 1.00 | 0.37 | -0.01 | 0.12 | 0.40 | 0.38 | 0.25 |
| 11 | 0.04 | -0.06 | 0.07 | 0.13 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.01 | 0.05 | 0.12 | 0.37 | 1.00 | 0.08 | -0.01 | 0.19 | 0.26 | 0.17 |
| 12 | 0.10 | 0.04 | -0.12 | -0.17 | -0.07 | -0.11 | 0.02 | -0.05 | -0.06 | -0.01 | 0.08 | 1.00 | 0.19 | -0.04 | -0.11 | -0.04 |
| 13 | 0.05 | -0.08 | -0.11 | -0.03 | -0.04 | 0.01 | -0.06 | 0.02 | -0.06 | 0.12 | -0.01 | 0.19 | 1.00 | 0.15 | -0.11 | -0.02 |
| 14 | 0.19 | 0.07 | 0.08 | 0.16 | 0.10 | 0.09 | 0.07 | 0.66 | 0.14 | 0.40 | 0.19 | -0.04 | 0.15 | 1.00 | 0.36 | 0.26 |
| 15 | 0.11 | -0.07 | 0.09 | 0.12 | 0.06 | 0.01 | 0.04 | 0.15 | 0.13 | 0.38 | 0.26 | -0.11 | -0.11 | 0.36 | 1.00 | 0.35 |
| 16 | 0.18 | -0.28 | 0.15 | 0.18 | 0.38 | 0.02 | 0.11 | 0.06 | 0.23 | 0.25 | 0.17 | -0.04 | -0.02 | 0.26 | 0.35 | 1.00 |

Factor 1 had a very high loading on the parent's ability to help; a high loading in parental expectation; moderately high loadings in family income, grade average, father's education and discussion with parents; and low loadings in county of residence and discussion with Principal, teacher or counselor. Factor 2 had very high loadings in rural-urban residence and father's occupation. Factor 3 had moderately high loadings in mother's education; low loading in oldest sister's education; and a very low loading in oldest brother's education. Factor 4 had moderately high loadings in discussion with peer group and age; and low loading in discussion with an adult.

Interpretation of Factors

Five out of the eight variables in which Factor 1 was loaded most heavily, were related to family circumstances and norms. Of the remaining three, two were related to school experiences and one to residence. However, Factor 1 had low loadings on two of these variables (discussion with Principal, teacher or counselor, and county of residence) and moderately high loading in the other variable (grade average). If grade average is considered to be a reflection of parental expectation, then this variable could also be considered to be a family variable. Thus, all six variables in which Factor 1 had a very high, high, or moderately high loading, were family variables. The clustering of these six variables tend to suggest that the students who came from families with a relatively high income, whose fathers have a relatively high level of educational achievement, whose parents tend to have a relatively high level of expectation regarding educational attainment of their children, are prepared to help their children financially through college, and participate in the discussion of educational plans of their children, tend to do well scholastically in school and to develop a high level of educational aspiration. Students from such family backgrounds thus develop a relatively strong commitment to education, which is also reflected in their tendency to discuss their educational plans beyond the high school level with their school Principal, teachers and counselors.

Factor 2 had high loadings on rural-urban residence and father's occupation. The clustering of these two variables can be explained in terms of the fact that there is a close correspondence between rural-urban residence and occupation. The respondents from urban communities tended to come from families where the fathers mainly followed professional occupations, or the occupations designated here as managers, officials or proprietors. The fathers of the respondents from a rural background mostly followed skilled or farm related occupations. Thus, Factor 2 may be designated as a "residence" factor.

Table 13. Factor Loadings of the Variables on Four Factors

| Variables | Factor Loadings | | | | Communality Coefficients |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | $F_1$ | $F_2$ | $F_3$ | $F_4$ | |
| 1. Educational Aspirations | 0.83 | 0.34 | 0.18 | -0.16 | 0.87 |
| 2. Ability of Parents to Help | 0.78 | -0.21 | 0.29 | -0.34 | 0.84 |
| 3. Parental Expectations | 0.50 | -0.20 | -0.12 | 0.08 | 0.31 |
| 4. Family Income | 0.41 | 0.14 | 0.33 | -0.01 | 0.30 |
| 5. Grade Average | 0.40 | -0.04 | -0.14 | 0.14 | 0.20 |
| 6. Discussion with Parents | 0.31 | -0.01 | 0.04 | 0.20 | 0.13 |
| 7. Discussion with Principal, Teacher or Counselor | 0.24 | -0.05 | -0.04 | 0.11 | 0.07 |
| 8. Father's Education | 0.39 | 0.23 | 0.26 | 0.12 | 0.29 |
| 9. County | 0.26 | 0.13 | 0.04 | -0.14 | 0.10 |
| 10. Rural-Urban Residence | 0.35 | 0.81 | -0.31 | -0.13 | 0.90 |
| 11. Father's Occupation | 0.51 | 0.72 | 0.25 | 0.17 | 0.88 |
| 12. Mother's Education | 0.21 | 0.06 | 0.40 | 0.12 | 0.22 |
| 13. Oldest Sister's Education | -0.02 | 0.12 | 0.28 | 0.10 | 0.10 |
| 14. Oldest Brother's Education | -0.05 | -0.03 | 0.16 | -0.01 | 0.03 |
| 15. Discussion with Peer Group | 0.13 | -0.37 | 0.00 | 0.34 | 0.28 |
| 16. Discussion with Adults | 0.19 | -0.02 | 0.04 | 0.28 | 0.11 |
| 17. Age | -0.31 | -0.16 | -0.01 | 0.33 | 0.23 |

Factor 3 had the highest loadings on mother's education, oldest brother's education and oldest sister's education. The clustering of these three variables thus can be easily explained in that they all relate to the intellectual tradition of the family from which the respondent comes. Thus, Factor 3 can be designated as the "intellectual tradition of the family".

Factor 4 includes the discussion of educational plans beyond high school with the student's peer group and with one or more adults who had experience in the occupations the respondents aspired to enter. The factor also included age. The common element of all these variables is that they all relate to what has been labeled in the preceding as "personal factors". The respondents who were relatively young in age not only discussed their educational plans with their friends but also with the persons who had experience in the occupations they planned to enter.

What is particularly interesting about the results of the factor analysis is that out of the four factors extracted, two related directly to family related variables. Factor 1, which explained about 70 percent of the variation in educational aspiration, loaded heavily on variables which related to the socio-economic status of the families and parental expectations. Factor 3, although explaining only a little over 3 percent of the variation in the dependent variable, also related to the family related variables, intellectual tradition of the family. Together these two factors explained over 73 percent of the variation in educational aspiration. This finding is consistent with Berdie's observation, who maintained, based on his Minnesota study, that family related variables were the most influential of all in determining the level of educational aspiration of high school seniors.

It is also interesting to point out that although rural-urban residence did not appear to have a significant association with the educational aspirations of all seniors considered together, and of the male seniors in the chi square analysis of the data, Factor 2, which explained almost 12 percent of the variation in the dependent variables, loaded most heavily on rural-urban residence and father's occupation. In other words, rural-urban residence was an important factor, although not as important as the family factor, in determining the level of educational aspiration of the high school senior.

Factor 4, designated here as "personal factor", explained only 2.6 percent of the variation in the level of educational aspiration. The clustering of the three variables under this factor was the least easy to explain.

On the basis of the results of the factor analysis, it can be concluded that there were several factors which affected the

level of educational aspiration of the high school seniors in the present study. The family factor appeared to be the most important of all. Both socio-economic status and the intellectual tradition of the family affected the student's level of educational aspiration. The rural-urban residence of the respondents also had an important influence on their level of educational aspiration.

That family is a dominant influence on the level of educational aspiration has also been reported in several other studies (Berdie, 1953; Slocum, 1966; Shill, 1968). It has been noted in the preceding that Berdie, in his Minnesota study, found that the determining influence upon student quest for formal education beyond high school was in the family and home environment. Secondary influences came from peers, teachers, and non-home sources. The implications of the Minnesota study had generally paralleled those in the Mississippi study conducted by Shill. Shill also concluded that the immediate family of the student had the most dominant influence on his level of educational aspiration. One of the strongest implications of this study was that students with relatively low educational aspiration were likely to receive very little encouragement from their families to continue their formal education beyond high school. Slocum, in his study of educational aspiration of rural high school seniors in Washington, also found that family circumstances and norms, including the intellectual tradition in the family, had a very strong determining influence on educational aspiration.

Until recently, the researchers have mainly focused their attention on rural-urban residence in explaining variation in educational aspiration. They have neglected the role of family and home environment on educational aspiration in their research. It is likely that rural-urban difference in educational aspiration is largely a function of differing family circumstances. The findings of the present study point in that direction.

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